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***Testimony by Representative Pam Sawyer
Before the Education Committee
On rHouse Bill 6318
February 23, 2011
11:00 Room 1E***

Good morning Chairmen Stillman and Fleischmann, Ranking Members Boucher and Giuliano, and members of the Education Committee. For the record, I am Representative Pam Sawyer, representing the 55th District. I am here today to speak *in favor* to **HB 6318** AAC Donations Of Equipment To The Regional Vocational-Technical School System.

The goal of the technical training programs offered by the state is to prepare students to be trained at a high level to enter the 21st century workplace.

What is at the core of success for our technical schools having high tech? State of the art equipment on which students train. Without the current machinery to practice and study our students will not be prepared.

I appreciate the opportunity to tell you about a proposed gift worth more than a million dollars to the Connecticut Aero Tech, the new state aviation mechanic training facility at Brainard Airport.

Pratt and Whitney has offered a jet engine that will be used for training by the students who are being prepared to enter the repair field. And the engine is sitting just across the river for over a year and a half, stuck because of a lawyer's decision.

It has been determined that even though the engine is to be used for instruction by students to take apart and put back together over and over again and will not be flown again, the state insists that P&W maintain the liability for the engine.

In the past the Technical School Administration under the State Department of Education (SDE) has given a letter of waiver to donors of technical equipment given for instruction. However, the

legal department of the Tech school division said there needs to be a change in the law to allow removal of the donors' indemnity.

This bill, as written, was proposed last year with the help of the SDE, the legal staff and government affairs people for Pratt and Whitney to allow for gifts such as this engine but other equipment currently used in industry today. From HVAC to nursing, automotive to culinary, donations of equipment set to today's workplace standards is essential. The state has never been able to afford to purchase the expensive equipment used in industry to prepare our students for the workplace of today. It has relied on the understanding and generosity of industry captains who give essential pieces of equipment for the training needed to prepare students to enter the workplace trained.